

Message Text

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11
ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EA-06 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 SP-02

L-01 DHA-02 INR-05 CIAE-00 IO-03 SCA-01 SAM-01 /045 W

----- 096452

P R 020312Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6822

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

JCRC NAS BARBERS PT HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 1847

LIMDIS

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NGDS-1

TAGS: MOPS, VN, US, AS

SUBJECT: FRAGMENTARY REPORT THROUGH AUSTRALIAN EMBOFF THAT
"AMERICAN PILOT" RECENTLY ESCAPED FROM JAIL IN HANOI

REF STATE 189762

1. DISCUSSED "AMERICAN PILOT" CASE JULY 31 WITH AUSTRALIAN
AMBASSADOR TO SRV, DAVID WILSON, WHO CURRENTLY VISITING
VIENTIANE. I SPECIFICALLY RAISED QUESTION OF POSSIBILITY OF
OBTAINING A COPY OF THE PHOTOGRAPH OF THE "BEARDED MAN"
CIRCULATED BY VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES IN HANOI.

2. WILSON SAID THERE WAS NO WAY HE COULD UNDERTAKE TO GET A
COPY OF THE PICTURE. HIS SOURCE WAS EXTREMELY VULNERABLE AND VERY
NERVOUS AND ALREADY SHOWING SIGNS OF REGRET HE HAD EVER
MENTIONED THE MATTER IN THE FIRST PLACE. HE WOULD BE FINISHED
IF THE VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES EVER FOUND OUT OR EVEN SUSPECTED
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HE HAD MADE THE ORIGINAL REPORT.

3. COMMENT: EVERYTHING THAT I KNOW ABOUT VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST SECURITY PRACTICES CONFIRMS WILSON'S JUDGMENT. GETTING A COPY OF THIS PICTURE EXCEEDS THE CAPACITIES OF BOTH THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY IN HANOI AND ITS SOURCE. PRESSING ON THIS QUESTION WOULD IN MY OPINION CAUSE THE SOURCE TO DRY UP COMPLETELY IF IT HAS NOT ALREADY DONE SO.

4. I THINK THE MOST USEFUL POSSIBLE NEXT STEP WOULD BE CAREFUL QUESTIONING OF THE NEXT GROUP OF AMERICANS TO LEAVE SAIGON WITH A VIEW TO EXPLORING POSSIBILITY RAISED IN STATE 180776 (212232Z JUL 76) THAT REPORT REFERS TO U.S. PRISONERS MOVED TO HANOI FROM SOUTH VIET-NAM.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: SmithRJ
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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04 MAY 2006

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